



The Ames Intelligencer

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■ The Ames Intelligencer was the first newspaper in the city of Ames ■

Memories of Central Junior High

When the Halls of City Hall Rang with Students' Voices

by Lynn Jennison

It had been many years since I had walked the halls of the building now utilized as the Ames City Hall. When I visited recently, I was met with much that was familiar along with much that had changed. The building served as Ames High School from 1938 to 1961 and, then, as Central Junior High School. I attended Central there from the Fall of 1961 through the Spring of 1964.

Most of my first year was spent on the east side of Clark Avenue across from what is now City Hall in a building then known as "old Central." Seventh graders were somewhat segregated at that time with most of their classes held in a building long since torn down to make way for a parking lot.



City Hall with the drop box marking the end of the tunnel

Despite where our classes were held, we occasionally ventured across the street or through the tunnel to participate in all-school assemblies. I'm not sure if my fear of the tunnel sprang more from its dimly lit, damp atmosphere or from the threat of the "older" students that waited on the other side. The tunnel connected the old and new buildings and I believe

was originally constructed as part of the heating system. Though not always open, it was offered as an alternative in inclement weather during the winter months. I more often chose to cross the street outside, in spite of the elements. Apparently, today the tunnel extends only from the Print Shop housed in the basement to the City Hall drop box on Clark and is closed off there.

I remember feeling quite grown up with the move to the "real" Central Junior High as an eighth grader. My older siblings had attended Ames High School in this building and it still bore that name both above the door and on the floor in the lobby area.

I had spent time in the gymnasium watching my brothers as they participated in basketball. That space remains little changed but for the addition of the exercise equipment and new locker facilities. The sound of basketballs dribbled on the floor and excited kids yelling to one another is much the same, though it was much louder when the pulled out bleachers and balcony seats were filled with cheering fans for the high school games. At the time I attended Central, the gymnasium was still being used by Ames High School, since the new gymnasium at 20th and Ridgewood was not completed until the mid-1960s. As junior high students, our basketball games were held on Saturday mornings and didn't conflict with the high school schedule.

A look into the auditorium was also a trip down memory lane. I had watched my sister perform in many band and vocal concerts here. Though it appears much the same, many advancements in technology have been made with improved sound and lighting systems. Memories of my performances in dance recitals and in various school choral programs came flooding back. I wasn't able to go into the backstage area but just being in the tiled hallway outside triggered flashbacks of lining up in proper order and of adults, index finger to lips, quieting down the excited performers.

Some areas are vastly different than I remember. In the southwest corner of the current lobby is an open area adjacent to the courtyard. My rather fuzzy recollection marks that as the site of my 9th grade Algebra class with Mr. Wacker in the lead. I seem to recall a small alcove just outside the door to this room, with stairs ascending up from the dreaded tunnel. Perhaps I'm linking my fear of the tunnel with my fear of Algebra and this isn't correct.



Much less intimidating now

The area that used to house the Principal's Office now has a sign on the door stating its use as the "Fraud Investigation Interview Room"—maybe not a totally discrepant use of the space!

The Council Chambers on the second floor once housed the Library for the school and I believe some of the old cabinetry was preserved during the remodeling of this room. The Library was very different from school media centers of today. Silence was mandatory and there were no computers, just lots of books and tables for study. The emphasis on cooperative learning was not nearly as strong in the early '60s. Occasionally, group projects were assigned but little work on those took place in the Library as it required too much conversation.



From silence! to rhetoric: Library to Council Chamber

The old vocal music room located in the west hall adjacent to the auditorium is now the Employee Lunch Room for the City Hall. It appears that use of the courtyard is encouraged now with tables and seating provided. I don't recall

ever being in the courtyard while in school there. I would guess that doors to this area were probably locked.

One memory that will forever remain associated with the building for me is where I was when I heard that John Kennedy had been shot on November 22, 1963. I was in English class when the teacher (I believe it was Mrs. Andrew) was called from the room. After a brief flurry of conversation amongst the students during her absence, she reentered with the news that President Kennedy had been assassinated in Dallas, Texas. This was the first horrific incident that I am able to remember and I still remember the struggle I had trying to make sense of it.

I personally feel that the Ames City Hall is a grand old building. The renovation seems to have been carried out with sensitivity to the original design and respect for its history. Of course, my feelings may be a bit colored by the memories I have of the days when the halls were crowded with students, eager to grow up and move on.



The forbidden courtyard as it appears today

[These recollections are certain to stir memories for our readers. What do you recall about City Hall when it was the high school or the junior high? Did anybody ever get into the courtyard? What used to be where the Police Department's jail cells are now? Send us your recollections for use in a future issue of The Intelligencer. Mail should be addressed to: City Hall Memories, AHA Intelligencer, PO Box 821, Ames, IA 50010 or e-mail to marti@isunet.net.

Recent AHA Exhibits

AHA is committed to displaying historical artifacts and documents that illustrate the history of Ames and Story County. An exhibit in the public library, November to January, called "Four Ames Attics," presented material on the Brown, Greeley, Judisch, and Munn families—important figures in local history.

A display in the windows at AHA headquarters at 108 5th Street contrasted Christmases in the 1960s with those in the 1860s, during the Civil War—an aluminum tree with color wheel in one window and one strung with popcorn in the other.

In the Beginning Ames Had a Local History Heritage But Who Would Preserve It?

by Kathy Svec

In the beginning, Farwell T. Brown retired from the Department of Transportation in 1976. Using his family's scrapbooks, he began presenting programs on Ames history. What he had learned about early education in Ames led him to hunt around an older Ames neighborhood, looking for a structure that might have been the first Ames school house. In the 1860s, even small buildings weren't demolished. Although they were saved, they might be moved, altered and/or added to. He was looking for clues, but hadn't yet found anything promising.

One day, Farwell received a call from Mike Rolling, a property owner on North 3rd Street who was going to tear down a building he owned. Mike had always heard there was an old structure in part of that building—did Farwell want to take a look?

On close inspection, Farwell was convinced that he had found the school house! Rolling was willing to donate the building, but a lot of work had to be done! Move the building; find a place to put it; gather money to restore it; furnish it authentically.

Energetic though he was, Farwell knew he needed help!



The first officers of the AHA: (left to right) Rodney Fox, secretary; Terry Adams, vice-president; and Farwell Brown, president

And so, a formal organization was established on November 17, 1980, to assist in this mighty undertaking and to assure that other projects could be launched to preserve and interpret Ames history. The photo above, from the January 14, 1981, Ames Tribune, shows the officers in Brown's office, discussing plans for the Hoggatt School project.

But why was the new organization called "Ames Heritage"? Why wasn't it titled "Ames Historical Society"? That name

was typical of other groups around the country with similar aims. Researching organization names in Story County, discovered that "historical society" was taken already. A lawyer suggested that "a heritage association" was the same thing as a "historical society" and so Ames Heritage Association was created in 1981.

In December 1982, the school house project was complete. That month, the newsletter featured an article headlined, "AHA Looks at Bigger Goals." The story explained:

"With the restoration of Hoggatt School virtually completed, the Ames Heritage Association is looking toward other and larger achievements.

Eventual acquisition of an Ames museum, preferably in a building of historical and architectural significance, was the most favorably considered suggestion in a survey conducted among Association members."

Twenty years later, with a quality location to house an artifact collection at 108 5th Street in Ames, the dream has taken steps toward reality—but the "bigger goal" remains the same!

Local History is a Participatory Activity!

Envision yourself doing the following:

Sliding your fingers over buttons from a Civil War uniform.

Reading the approved school textbook list from an 1875 report.

Delighting over handmade programs from a 1920s Ames social club.

Marveling over 100-year-old pictures of a store that still stands on Main Street.

Warming to handwritten letters that tell about life in Ames long ago.

If you're one of those who enjoy the stories that historical objects inspire, who can help these artifacts speak to others, then you're just the person the AHA's Collections Committee wants.

This group meets regularly to sort, inventory, and safely store artifacts. That's only part of their fascinating work. They also envision how these materials can be used in exhibits and displays that will stimulate public interest with their stories. Call the museum at 232-2148 to let AHA know you'd like to join the fun!

A Road Trip to the Bauge Farm in Norway [part 2]

by Rollie and Willie Struss

Around 1670 the population of Bauge, Norway, had reached a high point. The land now had to feed more mouths and when hard times came around the turn of the century, with war and failing crops, things went wrong. The farmers got into difficulties trying to pay the large rents early in 1700, and a cruel land master used harsh means to bring in delinquent debts. Many of the farmers left the farm and for a time much of Outer Bauge was desolate. When the farm was divided and subdivided over the years, some parts prospered, while others did not.

During the early 1700s the land was improved after taxes were forgiven. A stable population progressed steadily after about 1750. By 1800 the farm was getting good crop yields and conditions were better for the farmers. The freeholders got ownership of the farms from the monastery during the 1800s but not from the Barony.



Potatoes growing in the fields today

The potato famine hit Norway just as it did Ireland from 1845 to 1850. The result was the same: considerable emigration to America and other countries. By 1860 the farms were mainly grain and livestock farms and hay was used to feed cattle and sheep. Potatoes were also grown as they are a staple of the Norwegian diet, even to this

day. Many farmers held jobs outside of farming to increase their income. The translated historical account states that there was not much access to food supplies on the Bauge farm due to a lack of good roads and transportation.

Bjorn Bauge told stories in the late 1800s about the trolls visiting the farm in earlier years. Trolls are an important part of Norwegian folklore.

Nils and Synneva Bauge left Norway with their six children in 1861 and emigrated to Illinois via Quebec. Nearly 100 individuals left the Bauge farm for America from 1846 until the early 1900s. It is reported that one of the emigrants leaving the farm stopped halfway down the hills and looked back, waved his hat and shouted "Goodbye you old Bauge, I'll never see you again!" Some of the family members stayed in Illinois and changed their name to Boyd. Nils and Synneva had two more children born in Illinois before their family moved on to Iowa in 1866.

The farm area we saw on our trip was occupied by many residents living on small plots of land. The farmyards were typical with a frame house, a large barn, and a few outbuildings. None of the buildings looked very new but all were in good repair. A feature of the barns was the massive stone foundation built with the native blue granite available on the farm. A large barn remains at the intersection of the mountain road with the Bauge lane as a classic example of the structures in this region. Stone fences are dividing fields in this area, made from the stone available on the farm. Some of these fences appeared to be very old but still in



One of the stone fences in the Bauge farm area

We saw a farmer using a scythe to cut his hay along the roadside while others were using their small tractors to do farm work. Some of the hay crop was hung over a fence in the field to allow it to dry before it would be moved to the loft in the barn. Cattle and sheep grazed in the pastures and potatoes were growing in small plots on the farms. There was evidence that oats were harvested in some of the fields, with the stubble now growing up in grass again. No corn or soybeans were seen in this area, probably due to the cool and rainy weather. The farm families must have worked at other jobs off the farm in order to get enough income to live

and maintain their families. Their close proximity to the fjord also would provide access to fishing to supplement their food supplies and perhaps their income.

We could imagine the people were anxious to leave their homes in the 1800s when food was scarce and the landlords were demanding high rents. We also could understand how



Hay hanging on a fence to dry

the attraction of good farmland on level ground and at cheap prices would draw them to the Midwest. The emigrants were willing to give up essentially everything to leave their home country and move to a new beginning. Iowa held great promise for their future. Norway is a beautiful country that has many attractions, so it was difficult to make the decision to take the long trip, with few possessions, across an ocean and across more wide expanses of land to an unknown future. Nils and Synneva Bauge and their descendants found a better future in Iowa.

Donors Enrich AHA Collections

AHA's mission is to collect and preserve artifacts and archival records related to the heritage of Ames and its surrounding area from pre-pioneer times to the present. Only through the generosity of people with ties to the community can this be accomplished. A partial list of gifts to AHA during 2002 includes the following items.

A 60 year-old electric cash register that had served in the Adams grocery store—Terry Adams. A quilting frame, circa 1905—Betty Arndt. Quarry rocks from Hallett's Quarry—Royce Bitzer. Clothing and embroidery—Barbara Egemo. Copies of the Ames centennial history—Pauline Engelson.

Aluminum Christmas tree, 1950; concert programs from the 1960s—Mary and Henry Gee. World War I duffle bag—Mary Gillette. Graduation dress, school books, pedagogy journals—Lorraine Hawley. Portraits of K. W. and Lydia Gates Brown—Mary Howard.

Panoramic picture of a 1920s gun club—Doris Kinyon. An exhibit on the military service of Joseph Lawlor in World Wars I and II—Leo Lawlor. Apothecary bottles, separatory funnel, and pill boxes from Judisch Brothers drug store—Nancy Lewis.

H. L. Munn family items, including glass vases, brass tea strainer, silver spoons, monogrammed handkerchief, trunk, and 1930s Christmas cards—Joy Munn. Graduation gown and cap made by Collegiate Manufacturing—Dave Peterson.

Rocks and plants from the Bauge farm in Norway—Willie and Rollie Struss. A handmade 1868 wooden trunk from Germany and other items, including picture frames—Dorothy Tschopp. Photocopies of Hallett's Materials archives and digitized color photos—Dennis Wendell.

The Ames 1976 Bi-centennial quilt and the contents of the 1916 City Hall time capsule—Ames Public Library. Records of the activities of the Ames Women's Theater.

A more diverse list of gifts hardly could be imagined. AHA gratefully thanks all of these donors for these segments of local history that can be preserved and exhibited to future generations. Only in such ways can the story of this community be maintained and passed on.

AHA's headquarters operate at 108 5th Street have benefited from a scanner, donated by Leo Lawler and made operational by the skills of Andy Tang. Dennis Wendell has provided a Crosley dehumidifier, to aid in preservation, along with stacking office desk trays, and other archival and office supplies.

If you own a part of Ames' history and want to find a good home for it, please contact AHA. Headquarters are located at 108 5th, in downtown Ames, (515)232-2148. Since AHA doesn't have a full-time staff, you also can contact Dennis Wendell, Board member in charge of collections and acquisitions, at 233-1404 or dcw@iastate.edu.

Bauge Log Home Hosts a Variety of Visitors

From May through September 2002 the Bauge Log Home, located in McFarland Park, was opened nearly two dozen Sunday afternoons. Almost 400 people visited the Norwegian immigrant farm home.

The Conservation Board held both a spring and fall festival at the Home. The Neta Snook Questers, who gave the Home a kitchen table and a pantry cupboard, held one of their special meetings there, as did the ISU Retirees.

The Conservation Center runs a program for 5th graders. Groups of students spend a day at Bauge as part of their of study on Iowa History. With them, nearly 1,150 came to Bauge in 2002.

Hoggatt Rests After Busy Year

Ames' original school—AHA's first preservation project—was open to the public 14 weekends during the summer of 2002. During that time, well over 100 people visited to see what early education was like.

In both the spring and the fall, various school classes toured Hoggatt. The classes were: both Cheryl Cox's and Mrs. Bertanen's 3rd graders from Roosevelt; Cami Helgeson's 1st graders from Meeker; Sherri Hammer's 1st graders from St. Cecilia; and Karen Green's and Glen Sibel's 3rd graders from Northwood.



Hoggatt School is located at 18th and Burnett

Also visiting was a Home Schooled Class and an Adult Day Care group. In all, an additional 164 people came for these special visits. Thus, the grand total of visitors was 274.

Before the school could go into hibernation, it had to be sprayed for powder post beetles. Next spring the roof will need to be fixed, the ceiling repaired, and the indoors painted. There's plenty of work for volunteers—opportunity to join with others in preserving Ames' heritage. If you can help, contact Carole Jensen at 233-2431 or hmjensen@aol.com.

Ames Heritage Association Board: Pres., Kathy Svec; V-P., Carole Jensen; Sec., Letitia Kenemer; Treas., Peggy Baer; Margaret Benson, Catherine Hunt, Lynn Jenison, Leo Lawlor, Jorgen Rasmussen, Dennis Wendell, meets monthly.

AHA is a 501C3 non-profit organization dedicated to stimulating interest in state and local history through publications, programs, and exhibitions and by the operation of two historic sites: Hoggatt School, located on the grounds of Meeker School, near 18th and Burnett, and the Bauge Log Home, east and north of the lake at McFarland Park, which is 1/2 mile east of Dayton Road at 56541 180th Street. Hoggatt is open weekends June, July, and August and by appointment; Bauge, Sundays during good weather months.

AHA gratefully welcomes donations of historical material. Depending on price and suitability for the AHA collection, some items may be purchased. Office: 108 5th, Ames, 515-232-2148. amesheritage@qwest.net

AHA memberships start at \$25, except \$10 for students. Members receive The Intelligencer, named after an early Ames newspaper, four times a year. Comments and questions to: Editor, PO Box 821, Ames, IA 50010 or marti@isunet.net

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